C. James Patti
Chairman

SUPPORT FULL FISCAL YEAR 2022 FUNDING FOR THE MARITIME SECURITY PROGRAM

General Stephen Lyons, Commander, United States Transportation Command (2020)

"When our nation goes to war, so does the maritime industry. Today, as in the past, the Defense Department relies on U.S.-flag vessels, global trade routes and expert mariners to comprise a naval auxiliary in times of crisis."

BACKGROUND

The Maritime Security Program (MSP) is a unique public – private partnership that gives the Department of Defense (DOD) the commercial sealift readiness capability, global intermodal systems and U.S. citizen civilian mariners it needs to advance America's interests and to support American troops.

Originally enacted as P.L. 104-239, the Maritime Security Act of 1996 established a maritime security fleet of 47 militarily useful, privately-owned U.S.-flag commercial vessels. P.L. 108-136, the National Defense Authorization Act of 2004, extended MSP for an additional ten years and expanded the maritime security fleet from 47 to 60 vessels. P.L. 112-239, the National Defense Authorization Act of 2013, extended MSP through FY'25 and P.L. 116-92, the National Defense Authorization Act of 2020, extended it through Fiscal Year 2035. Public Law 114-92, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016, authorizes $318 million for MSP in Fiscal Year 2022.

Rear Admiral Mark Buzby, United States Maritime Administrator (2020):

"MSP is the heart of sustainment sealift, maintaining a fleet of 60 commercially-viable, militarily-useful vessels, active in international trade, but available on-call to meet DOD contingency requirements. MSP operators also provide employment on their vessels for 2,400 of the trained, skilled U.S. Merchant Mariners our country depends on to crew the RRF and MSC surge vessels if activated during a surge."

As history has proven, American mariners never fail to sail into harm's way when needed by the United States. There is no guarantee foreign crews will do the same. It is essential that Congress and the Administration stop the further loss of U.S.-flag vessels and the outsourcing of American maritime jobs. The choice for our Nation is simple: either the United States continues to entrust the security of our nation and the safety of American troops deployed overseas to U.S.-flag vessels and their U.S. citizen crews, or instead turns over America's security interests and the well-being of American troops to foreign flag,

foreign crewed vessels which may or may not choose to support America and our allies. One important step is to fully fund MSP.

NATIONAL SECURITY BENEFITS OF MSP

General Stephen Lyons, Commander, United States Transportation Command (2020)

"With 85 percent of our forces based in the continental United States, nearly 90 percent of our military equipment is expected to deploy via sealift in a major conflict. In order to deploy those forces, we require safe, reliable and ready U.S.-flagged vessels [and], mariners to crew those ships. . . ."

In its 2019-2020 maritime policy statement, the Navy League of the United States declares, "Our U.S.-flag merchant fleet must maintain its capability in peacetime to provide surge capacity in time of war. The ships, men and women of the U.S.-flag fleet give us the capacity to sustain and support any long-term engagements and must be preserved."

Since the inception of military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan in 2002, 98 percent of the cargoes have been transported to the region on either U.S.-flag commercial vessels or U.S. Government owned and/or controlled vessels - all of which are crewed by U.S. citizen civilian merchant mariners. Since 2009, privately owned U.S.-flag commercial vessels and their civilian U.S. citizen crews have transported more than 90 percent of the sustainment cargo needed to support U.S. military operations and rebuilding programs in Iraq and Afghanistan. Most importantly, vessels enrolled in MSP carried 99 percent of these cargoes.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF MSP

A 2006 report prepared for the National Defense Transportation Association and Military Sealift Command concluded that at that time "the likely cost to the government to replicate just the vessel capacity provided by MSP dry cargo vessels would be $13 billion." In addition, the United States Transportation Command estimated that it would cost the Government an additional $52 billion to replicate the global intermodal systems made available to DOD by MSP contractors who are continuously developing, maintaining and upgrading their logistics systems. Instead of the estimated $65 billion it would cost the taxpayer if there were no MSP a fully funded MSP will continue to provide DOD with the militarily-useful U.S.-flag vessels, U.S. civilian maritime manpower, and the global intermodal systems it needs at a cost to the taxpayer of $318 million in FY'22 as authorized by Congress.

REQUEST FOR ACTION

Senators Mazie Hirono and Roger Wicker will be circulating a "dear colleague" letter to be sent to the Committee on Appropriations supporting full funding for the Maritime Security Program in Fiscal Year 2022 at its Congressionally authorized level of $318 million. We ask that you join with them in this effort and that you indicate your support for the Maritime Security Program and American maritime jobs by signing the Hirono-Wicker "dear colleague" letter.

American Maritime Congress * American Maritime Officers * American Maritime Officers Service * American President Lines* American Roll-on Roll-off Carrier LLC * Bold Ocean, Inc.* Hapag-Lloyd USA, LLC * International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots * Keystone Shipping Company* Liberty Maritime Corporation * Maersk Line, Limited * Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association * Maritime Institute for Research and Industrial Development * Patriot Contract Services * Sailors' Union of the Pacific * Seafarers International Union * Transportation Institute* US Ocean, LLC* U.S. Shipping, Inc* Waterman Logistics*